

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, PFOR, GR, US
SUBJECT: U.S.-GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS: SPYROS CHRYSOPATHIS
TO BE NEW GREEK DELEGATION CHIEF

1. OVER THE WEEKEND I HAD A PRIVATE DINNER WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE AVEROFF AND MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR JOHN TZOUNIS AT LATTER'S HOME DURING WHICH WE DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF MATTERS OF CURRENT INTEREST, WHICH HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED IN OTHER EMBASSY REPORTING. HOWEVER, AT ONE POINT THEY INDICATED TO ME THAT PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH FONMIN BITSIOS AND OTHERS, HAD DECIDED TO NAME AMBASSADOR SPYROS CHRYSOPATHIS TO REPLACE PETROS CALOGERAS AS CHIEF OF THE GREEK DELEGATION FOR THE U.S.-GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS, WHENEVER THEY ARE RESUMED. (AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, CALOGERAS DEPARTED GREECE FOR HIS NEW ASSIGNMENT AS AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW IN NOVEMBER. CHRYSOPATHIS REPLACED MIGLIARESSIS A FEW DAYS AGO AS DIRECTOR OF THE THIRD POLITICAL DIVISION IN THE MFA, RESPONSIBLE FOR RELATIONS WITH ALL THE COUNTRIES OF WESTERN EUROPE AND NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA. FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS HE HAS BEEN DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS AND PRIOR TO THAT WAS GREEK AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE; TZOUNIS WIL NOW BE HIS IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR.)

2. EARLIER TODAY, ACCOMPANIED BY DCM MILLS, I CALLED ON
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CHRYSOPATHIS IN HIS NEW POSITION TO WORK OUT THE EMBASSY'S OPERATING RELATIONSHIPS WITH HIM AND HIS STAFF. IN RESPONSE TO MY INQUIRING, HE SAID HE HAD BEEN TOLD HE WAS BEING DESIGNATED TO TAKE OVER THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE GREEK SIDE AND INDICATED THAT HE WAS ALREADY READING THROUGH FILES ON THIS SUBJECT. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN THE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE RESUMED AND WAS WAITING

FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIS SUPERIORS, ALTHOUGH HE WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY IN TURN WERE AWAITING SOME KIND OF WORD FROM THE U.S. SIDE AS TO WHEN, WHERE AND HOW WE WOULD LIKE TO RESUME THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE THOUGHT THAT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HIS OWN SUBSTITUTION FOR CALOGERAS, THE GREEK TEAM WOULD CONTINUE TO HAVE ALL THE SAME KEY MEMBERS IT HAS HAD IN THE PAST. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT HE THOUGHT THE NEXT PHASE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS COULD BE OPENED IN WASHINGTON IF THAT WERE OUR PREFERENCE.

3. CHRYSOSPATHEIS ASKED IF I HAD ANY IDEA AS TO WHEN THE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE RESUMED. I SAID THAT I HAD RECEIVED NO FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT IN RECENT DAYS BUT WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT A DECISION WOULD BE MADE IN WASHINGTON IN THE NEAR FUTURE AS TO HOW WE WISHED TO PROCEED. AS HE KNEW, I SAID, THIS WAS A VERY IMPORTANT AND COMPLEX SUBJECT AND THERE WERE MANY CONSIDERATIONS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. WE AGREED TO STAY IN TOUCH ON THE MATTER.

4. COMMENT: IF CHRYSOSPATHEIS IS FORMALLY NAMED AT SOME POINT AS HEAD OF THE GREEK DELEGATION -- AS APPEARS ALMOST CERTAIN UNLESS WE WERE TO DESIGNATE SOMEONE FOR WHOM HE WOULD NOT BE AN APPROPRIATE COUNTERPART -- I WOULD NOT EXPECT THIS TO AUGUR WELL FOR A SPEEDY CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. ALTHOUGH CHRYSOSPATHEIS IS ORGANIZATIONALLY AND FROM A PRIOR SERVICE POINT OF VIEW ABOUT ON THE SAME LEVEL AS CALOGERAS, HE WILL BE ENTIRELY NEW TO THIS MAZE OF AGREEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS AND I FEAR HE IS PROBABLY LESS ABLE AND VIGOROUS THAN HIS PREDECESSOR. MOREOVER, THIS WOULD REPRESENT A DOUBLE-LEVEL DEESCALATION FROM CONFIDENTIAL

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THE ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED SUCCESSOR TO CALOGERAS (SECRETARY GENERAL THEODOROPOULOS, WHO HAS NOW BEEN NAMED TO HEAD THE GREECE-EEC NEGOTIATIONS). OF COURSE, WE CAN ALWAYS INTENSIFY THE PRESSURES ON CARAMANLIS AND THE GOG TO EXPEDITE THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE DIFFICULTIES WE WILL FACE IN ACCOMPLISHING THIS OR THE PRICE WE WILL HAVE TO PAY IN CONCESSIONS FROM THE U.S. SIDE IF WE WANT TO BRING THEM TO A RAPID CONCLUSION.
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